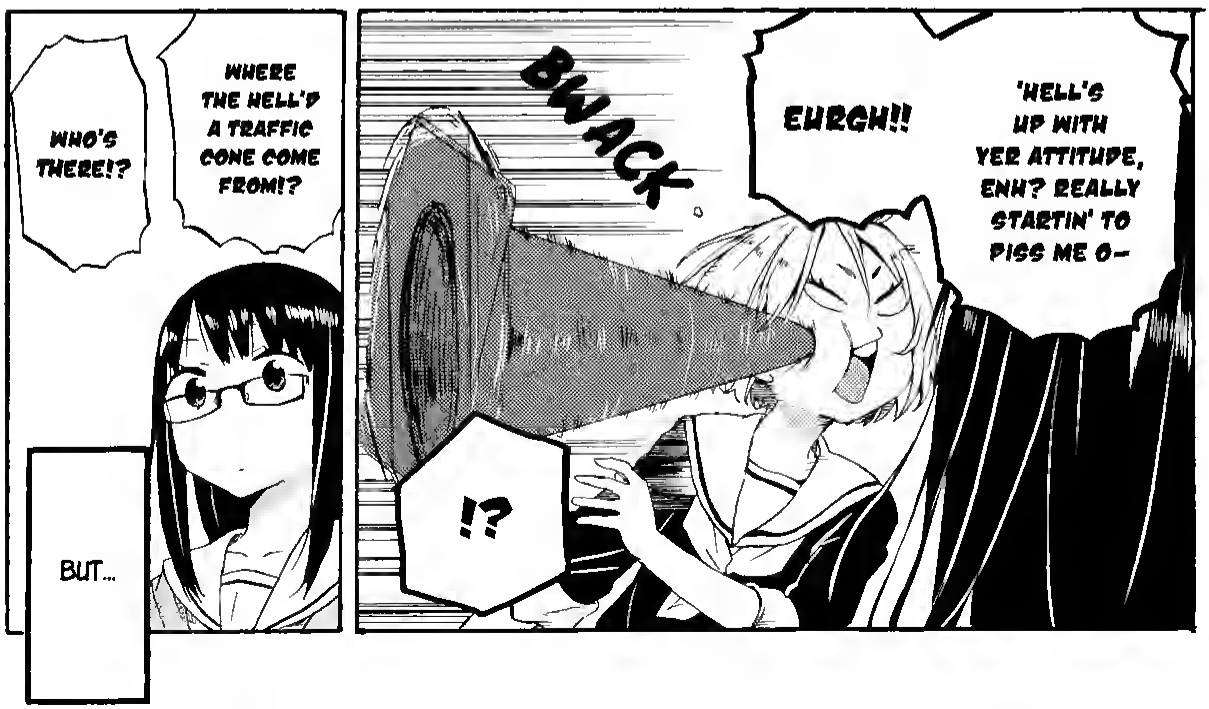
OUT OF THE BLUE!
アウトオブザブルー!
くみちょう
KUMICHOU
I'M A TRANSFER STUDENT FROM EAST JAPAN.
WOOOOOOW!
AND THE TRANSFER STUDENT, TAKAOKA, GOT THE TOP GRADE ONCE AGAIN.
LEMME HEAR A BIG HAND FOR HER.
THANK YOU.
I GET REALLY GOOD GRADES.

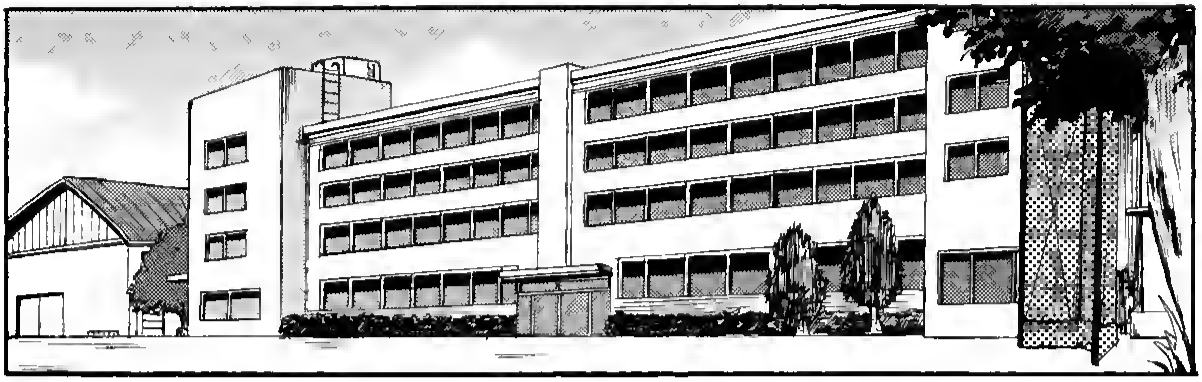
I'M TERRIBLE AT SPORTS, BUT THAT HAS IT'S OWN CHARM.
SLIIIIDE
MY APPEARANCE ISN'T SO BAD. PLUS, I WEAR GLASSES.

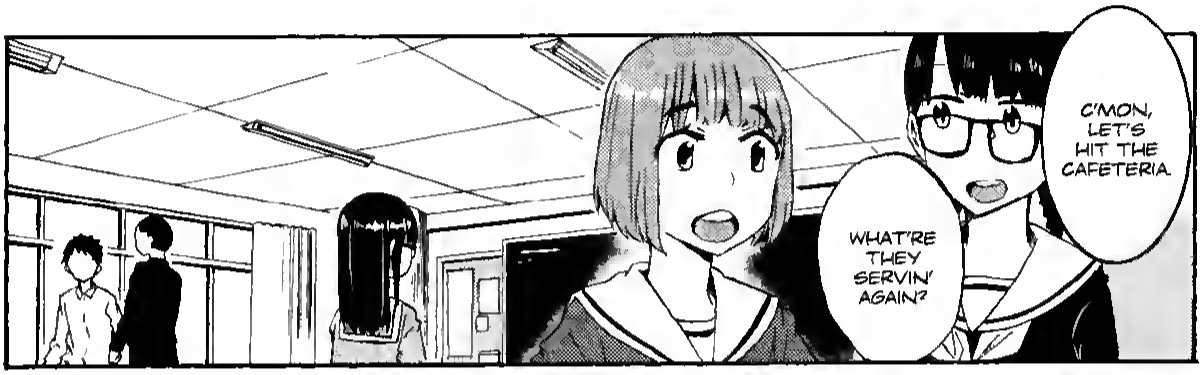
PUT IT ALL TOGETHER. AND IT'S LED TO ME BEING, ENH... MODERATELY POPULAR.
WHICH HAS LED TO—

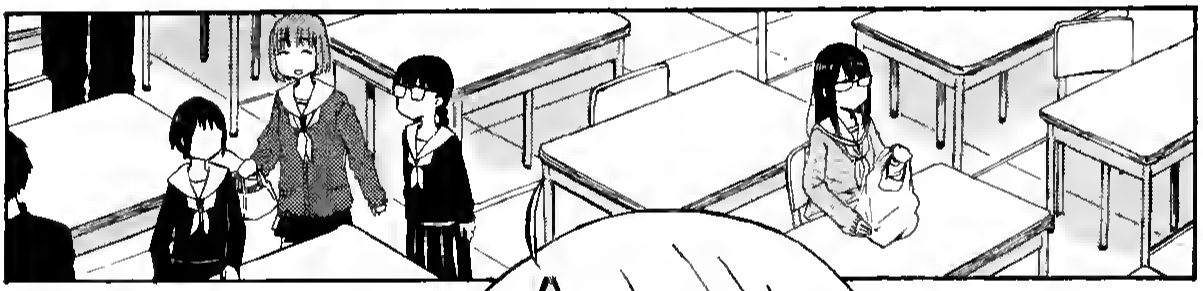
WHAT A CLICHÉD SCENE...
HEY! YOU LISTENIN' TO ME?
YES, I'M LISTENING. MAN, YOU'RE ANNOYING.
HUH!?
THIS HAS ALL BEEN ACCORDING TO EXPEC-TATIONS.
fsshhh
...THIS.
AIN'T YOU ACTIN' A BIT FULL OF YERSELF?
IT'S SERIOUSLY IRRITATING, I GOTTA SAY.


WHO'S THERE!?
WHERE THE HELL'D A TRAFFIC CONE COME FROM!?
BUT...
BWACK
!?
EURGH!!
'HELL'S UP WITH YER ATTITUDE, ENH? REALLY STARTIN' TO PISS ME O-

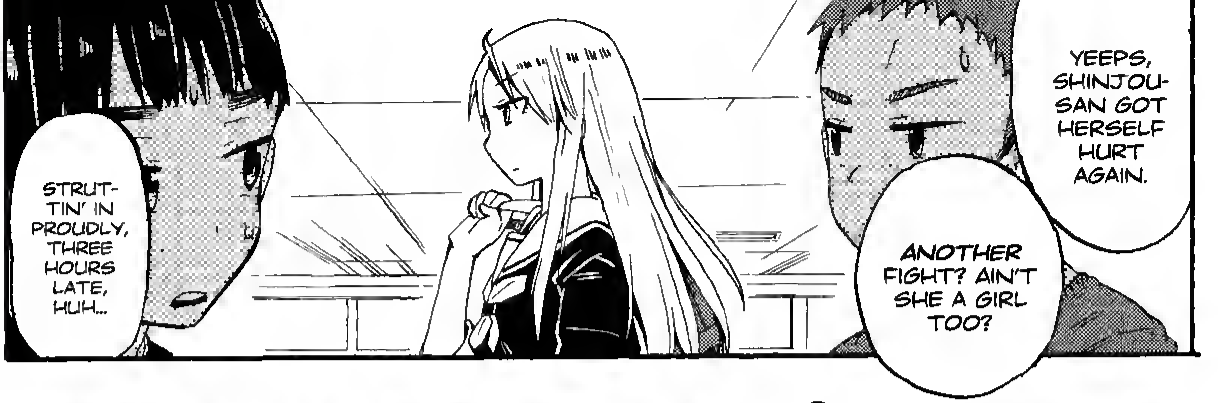
くみちょう
KUMICHOU
OUT OF THE BLUE!
アウトオブザブルー!
YER THE ONES'RE PISSIN' ME OFF.
THIS DEVELOPMENT, HERE, WAS NOT.

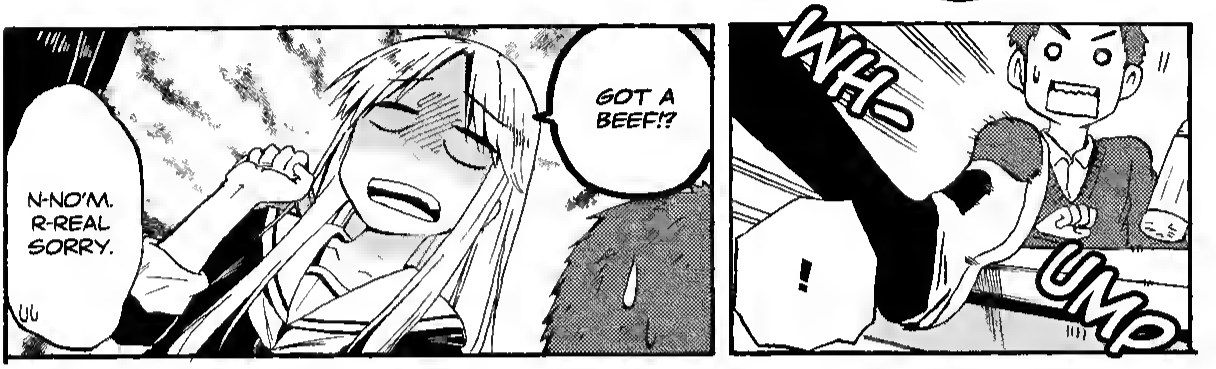


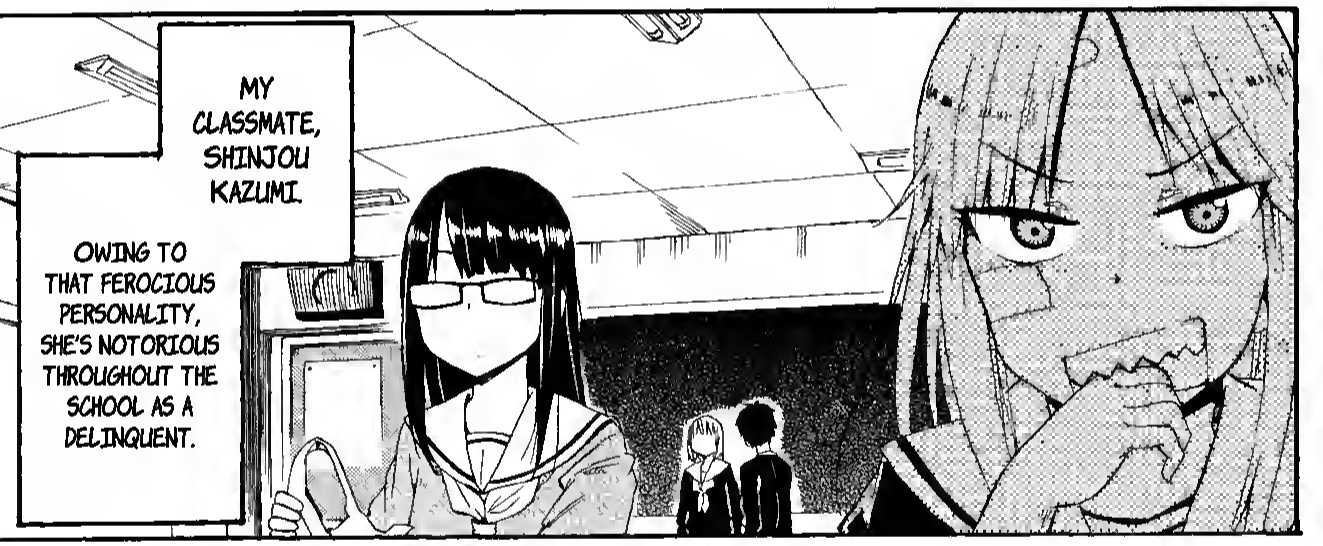

C'MON, LET'S HIT THE CAFETERIA
WHAT'RE THEY SERVIN' AGAIN?



SLI-
DE


STRUT-TIN' IN PROUDLY, THREE HOURS LATE, HUH...
YEEPS, SHINJOU-SAN GOT HERSELF HURT AGAIN.
ANOTHER FIGHT? AIN'T SHE A GIRL TOO?


N-NO'M. R-REAL SORRY.
GOT A BEEF!?
WHO
!
UMP


MY CLASSMATE, SHINJOU KAZUMI.
OWING TO THAT FEROCIOUS PERSONALITY, SHE'S NOTORIOUS THROUGHOUT THE SCHOOL AS A DELINQUENT.

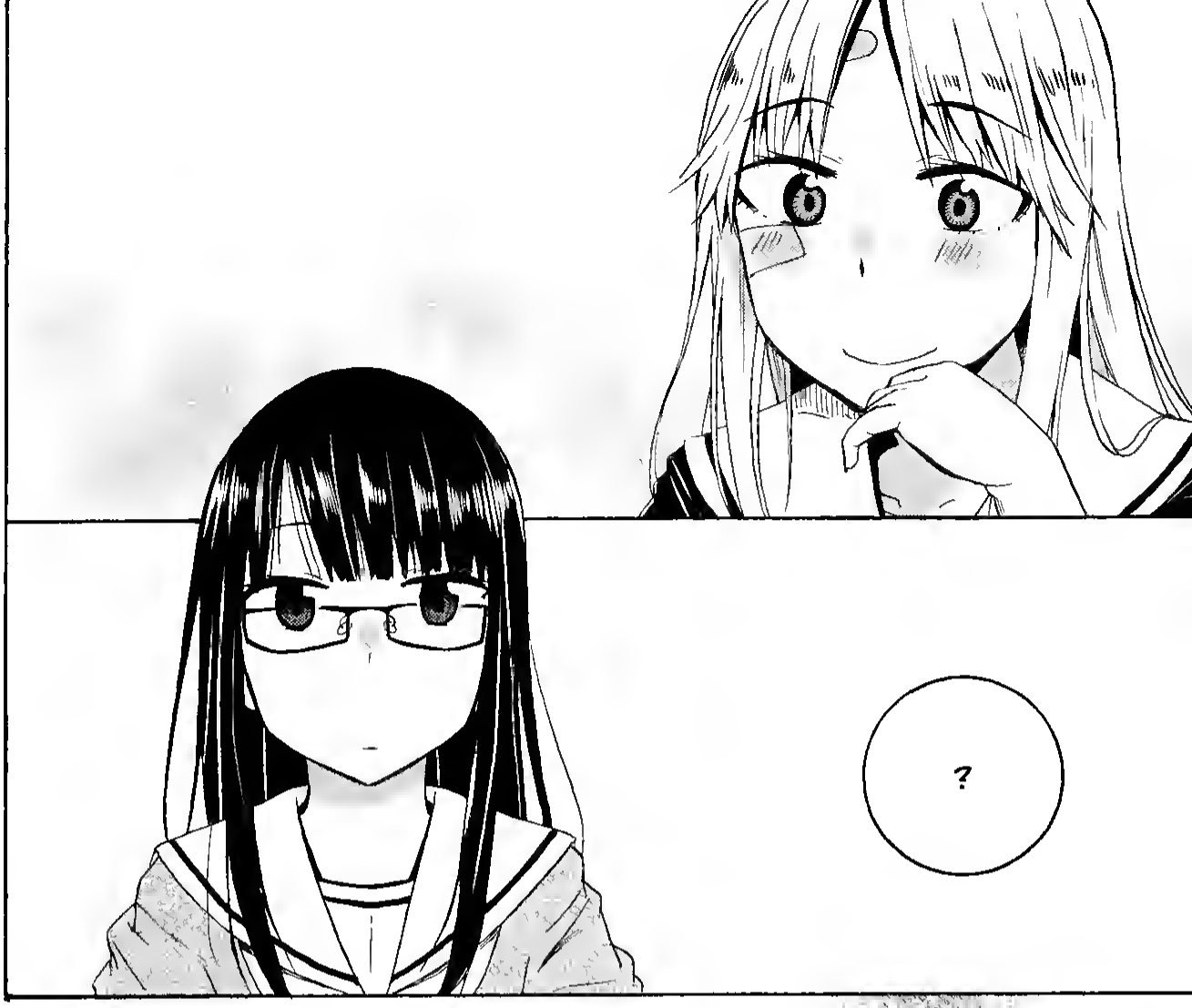
WHAT EXACTLY WAS THE DEAL WITH THAT, I WONDER?
YESTERDAY, FOR SOME REASON, SHE HELPED (?) ME OUT, BUT...
Rawr!!

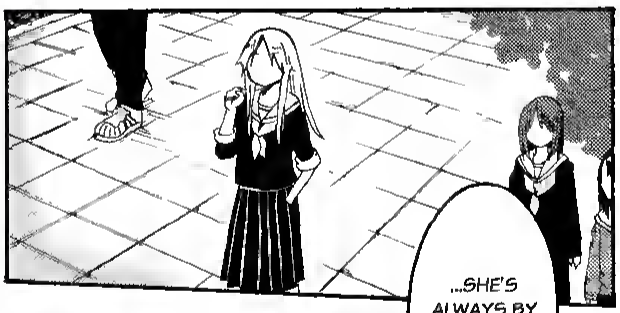
RUSTLE
WELL, NOT REALLY ANY CONCERN OF MINE.
IN ANY CASE,
SHE'S THE SORT YOU'D NEVER HAVE THE LEAST COMMON GROUND WITH, LIVING A NORMAL LIFE.
...IS...
Mega Jumbo Size
Soba
With Broth and Grated Yam!
...WHAT I WOULD'VE FIGURED, BUT...
TRANSFER STUDENT.
COULD I GET A SEC?
...HM?
Slurrrp

SO,
WHAT IS IT?
MMM...
WELL, Y'SEE...
HRMMM... MAYBE YOU DON'T LIKE ME ASKIN' ALL SUDDENLY, BUT...
?
...
blush
COULD YA HELP ME OUT A LITTLE WITH STUDYIN'?
WELL, I DON'T BLAME YA, SO SUDDEN AND ALL...
AND I PRO'LY JUST MAKE YA UNCOM-FORTABLE, NO WAY YOU'D WANT TO...
SURE, I'LL HELP.
AND IF I DON'T GET A 70 THEY'RE TALKIN' ABOUT SOME SERIOUSLY ANNOYING STUFF LIKE HOLDIN' ME BACK A YEAR...
Y'SEE IT'S JUST, THEY'RE MAKIN' ME TAKE THAT LAST TEST AGAIN,
YOU WILL!?
YEAH.

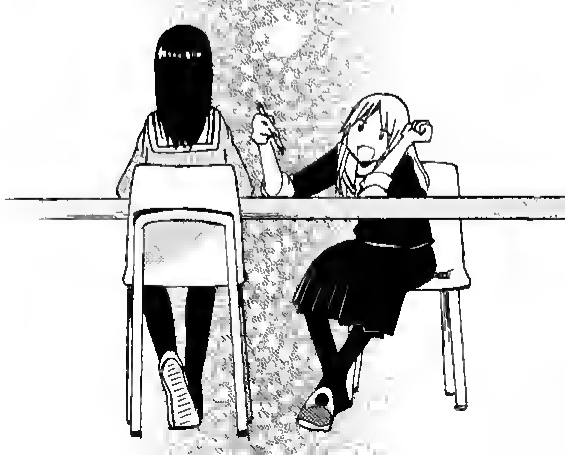
I TELL YA, YER SAVIN' MY LIFE HERE!
OTHER KIDS IN CLASS WON'T EVEN LOOK ME IN THE EYE...
AND THE MAKE-UP TEST COMIN' UP NEXT WEEK, DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO!
IT'S FINE. I HAD NOTHING ELSE TO DO.
...
UMM... TRANSFER STUDENT, THAT THING BACK THEN... DOES THAT HAPPEN A LOT?
BACK THEN?
MWELL... Y'KNOW, THAT THING THAT KINDA SEEMED LIKE THEY WERE BULLYIN' YOU...
AH, IF YOU DON'T WANNA TALK ABOUT IT, THAT'S FINE.
AH...

S-SORRY, ASKIN' SUCH A WEIRD THING...
Kind of a hassle...
SHE'S CONCERNED ABOUT ME, IS SHE?
I WOULDN'T REALLY SAY THEY WERE BULLYING ME OR ANYTHING.
THEY JUST DON'T LIKE ME BECAUSE I'M THE NEW FACE AROUND HERE.
HAPPENS ALL THE TIME, RIGHT? JUST SOME PETTY, MEANINGLESS THING. IT DOESN'T REALLY BOTHER ME.
GRIN
WHAT?
HMMM? SEEMS LIKE YOU REALLY DO GOT SOME GUTS.
JUST THE WAY I WOULDA THOUGHT.
NAH, TALKIN' TO MYSELF.

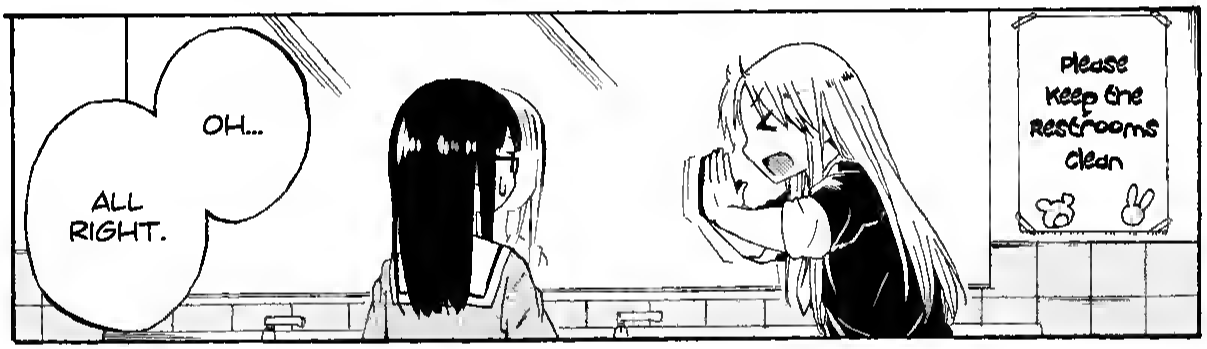




AND SO, THIS IS HOW MY STUDY SESSIONS WITH SHINJOU-SAN BEGAN. HOWEVER...



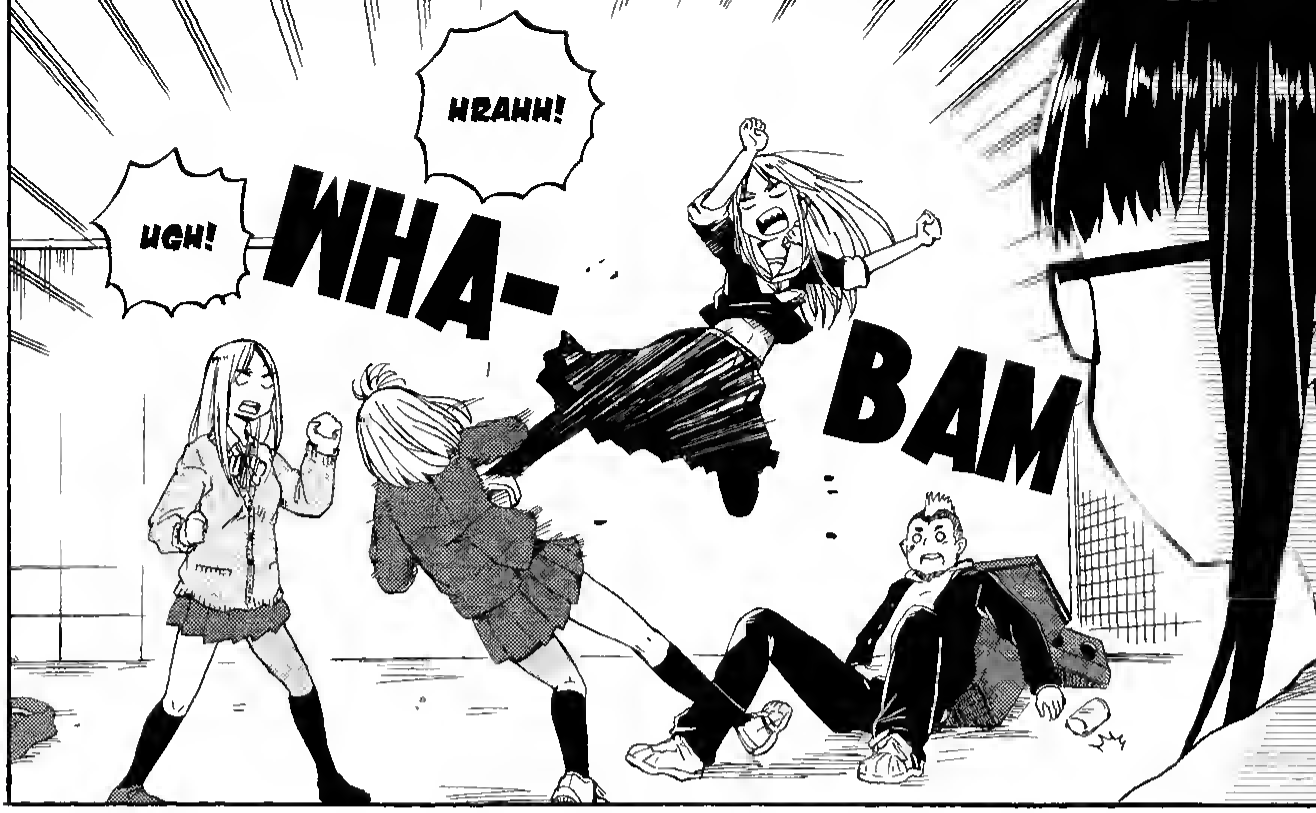
CLAP
I'M REAL, REAL SORRY! I MADE A PROMISE WITH A FRIEND! I CAN' MAKE IT TODAY!

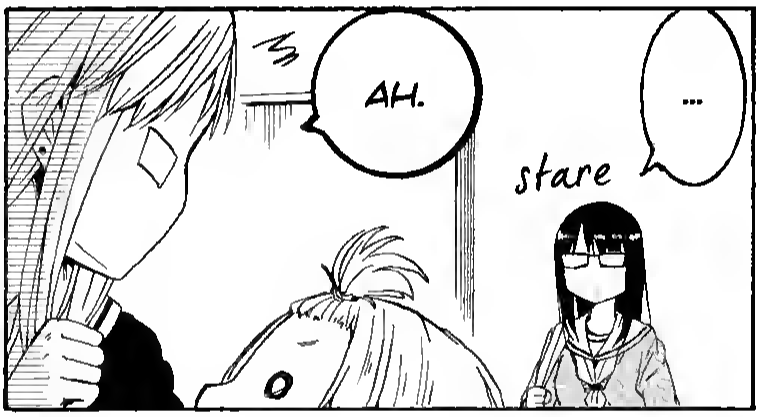

Please keep the restrooms clean
OH...
ALL RIGHT.

EH!?
S-SURE! I AT LEAST HAVE FRIENDS!
...AND LIKE, AIN'T THAT A LITTLE TOO BLUNT!?
...YOU HAVE FRIENDS?

THOUGHT SHE WAS MORE OF A LONE-WOLF TYPE,
BUT, SEEMS SHE'S A SURPRISINGLY NORMAL GIRL

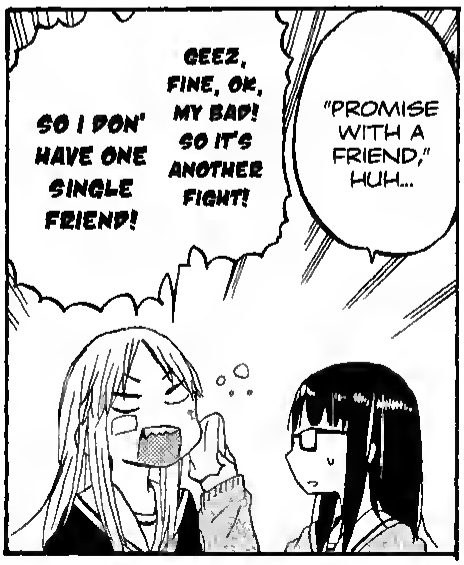
Hiyahhhh!
That how you want it??
?


HRAHH!
UGH!
WHA-
BAM


AH.
...
stare

EUGH... I FEEL SO LAME...
DREEEAR

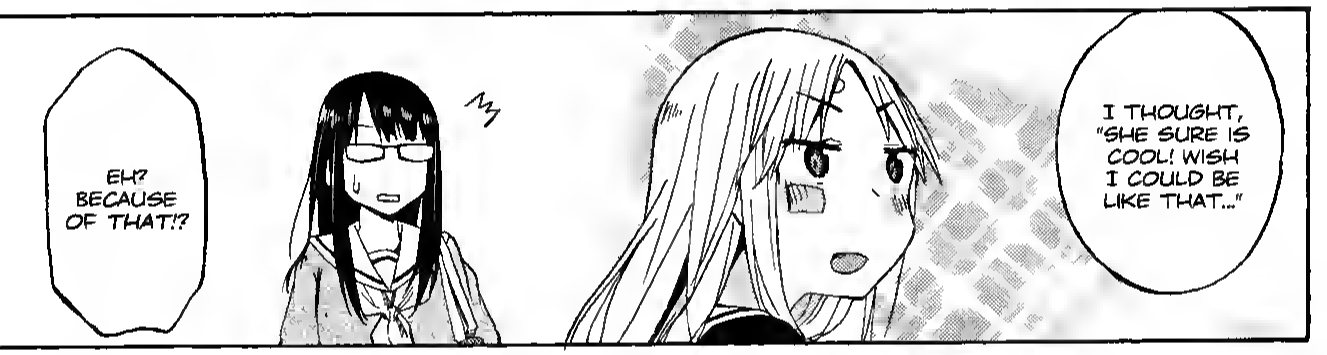
...
QUIT WITH THE PITYIN' LOOK!

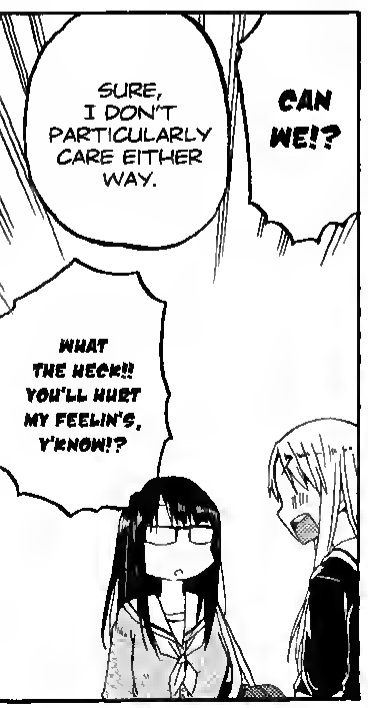

"PROMISE WITH A FRIEND," HUH...
GEEZ, FINE, OK, MY BAD! SO IT'S ANOTHER FIGHT!
SO I DON' HAVE ONE SINGLE FRIEND!

THAT FIRST DAY YA TRANSFERRED IN, WHEN I SAW YA SITTIN' THERE ALONE ALL DIGNIFIED, EATIN' YOUR JUMBO-SIZE EXTRA GARLIC RAMEN...
slurp
slurp

bz dump

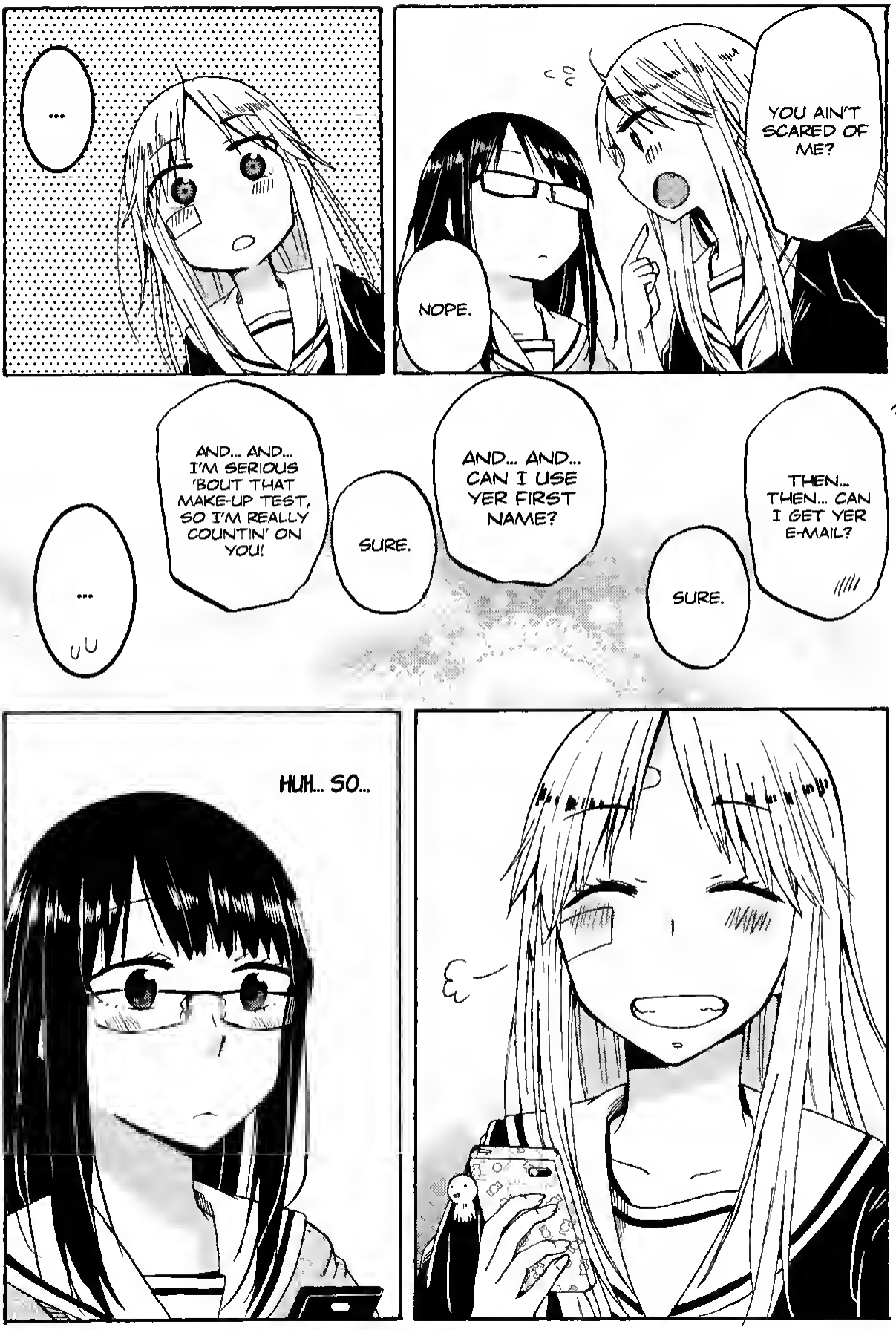
...
Y'SEE, TRUTH IS... I ACTUALLY HAD A SECRET MOTIVE IN TRYIN' TO TALK TO YOU.
SECRET MOTIVE?


EH? BECAUSE OF THAT!?
I THOUGHT, "SHE SURE IS COOL! WISH I COULD BE LIKE THAT..."


SURE, I DON'T PARTICULARLY CARE EITHER WAY.
CAN WE!?
WHAT THE HECK!! YOU'LL HURT MY FEELIN'S, Y'KNOW!?

...THEN, WHY DON'T WE?
EH!?

BEIN' THE WAY I AM, I NEVER FIT IN ANYWHERE. I'M ALWAYS BY MYSELF.
I JUST THOUGHT... "SURE WOULD BE NICE, IF WE COULD BECOME FRIENDS..."


...
YOU AIN'T SCARED OF ME?
NOPE.
AND... AND... I'M SERIOUS 'BOUT THAT MAKE-UP TEST, SO I'M REALLY COUNTIN' ON YOU!
...
SURE.
AND... AND... CAN I USE YER FIRST NAME?
SURE.
THEN... THEN... CAN I GET YER E-MAIL?
HUH... SO...

IN THE END, EVEN THE "LONE WOLF" IS JUST ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE DOG FAMILY.
BA-DI-DI-DEET
RISA, HAVE THOSE BEEN TEXT MESSAGES COMING IN ALL THIS TIME?
AH, SORRY. I'LL SHUT THE SOUND OFF.
BA-DI-DI-DEET
OH, NO, DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT! I MEAN, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER HEARD YOUR CELL PHONE MAKE A NOISE!
I NEED TO TELL YOUR FATHER TOO! "RISA FINALLY MADE A FRIEND..."
...THANKS FOR THE MEAL.
That was a really fast reply...
BA-DI-DI-DEET
HUH?
A FRIEND,
KIND OF AN ODD FEELING

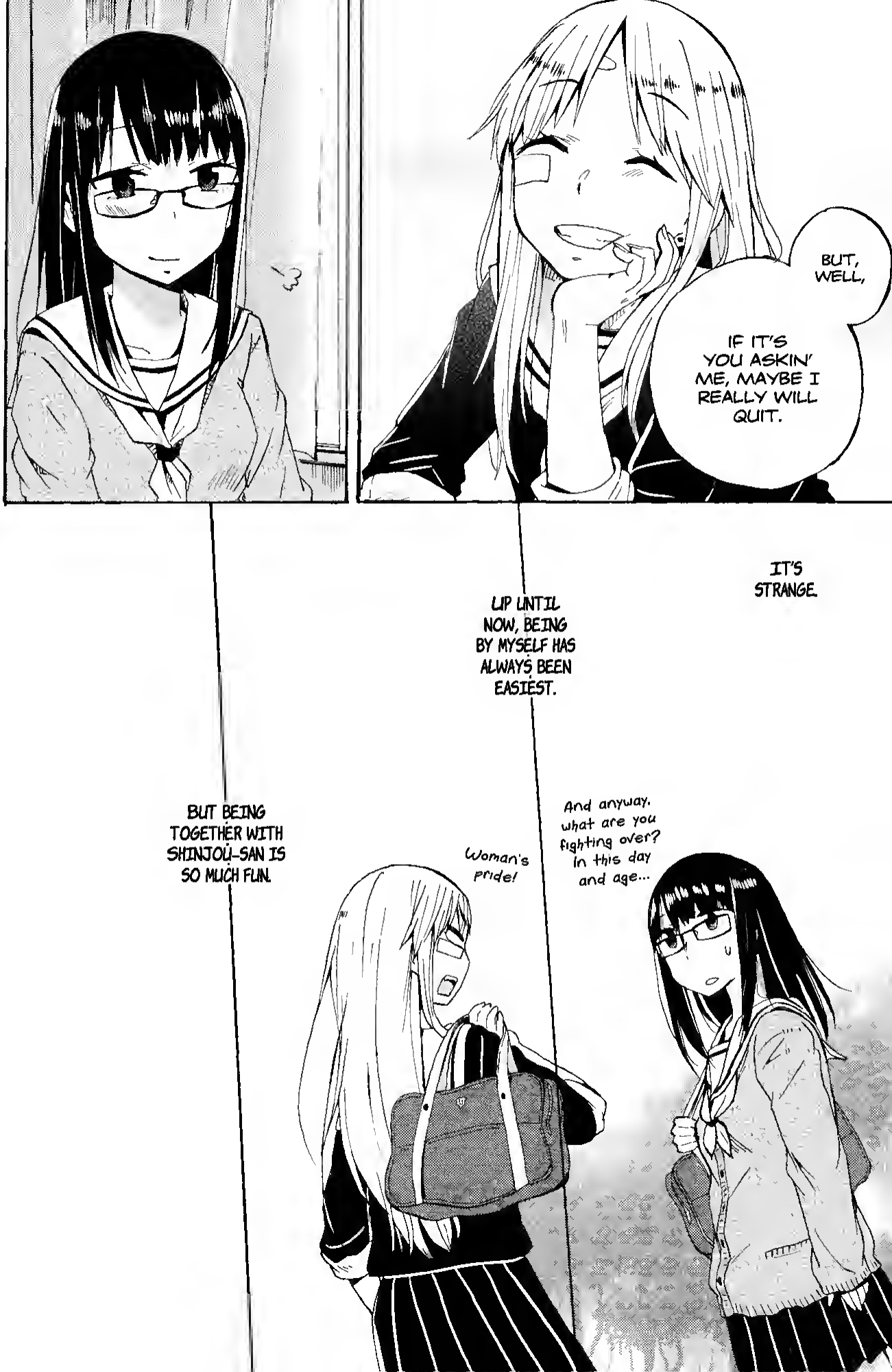
NNNN... S'NO GOOD!! I DON' GET IT AT ALL!
GIVE IT SOME EFFORT, PLEASE. IT'S PRETTY SIMPLE.
AND WHAT IS THAT, A NERVOUS HABIT? DOESN'T THAT HURT?
gnaw
gnaw
KEEPTH ME CALM TO BITE 'EM LIKE THITH.
You have to insert it into this formula here...
SAY, R-... RISA...
YOU STILL KEEP IN TOUCH WITH YER FRIENDS FROM TOKYO?
SHE STAMMERED...
WELL, NOT REALLY. I DIDN'T HAVE ANY WHO WERE THAT CLOSE.

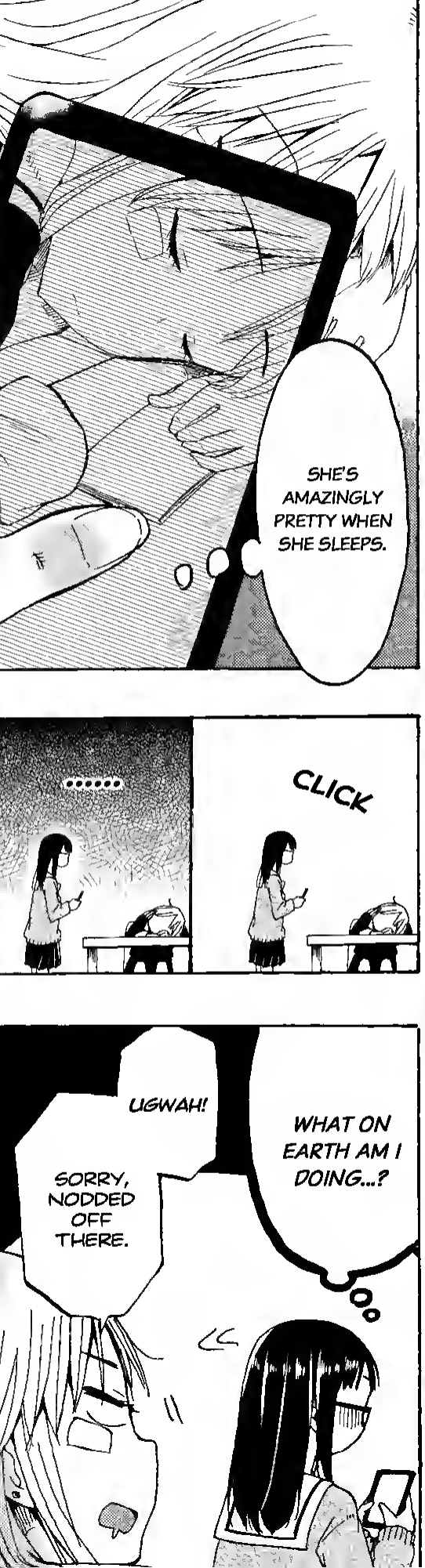
HOW 'BOUT A BOY-FRIEND? YER POPULAR, RIGHT?
NO, I DON'T HAVE ONE. I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY I'M POPULAR...
ONLY BECAUSE I'M GOOD-LOOKING, THOUGH.
REFRESH-INGLY FRANK, BUT KINDA TICKS ME OFF.
...YER NOT LONELY AT ALL?
NOT REALLY.
TO BE HONEST, I'VE NEVER HAD ALL THAT MUCH INTEREST IN OTHER PEOPLE.
OR SHOULD I SAY... I NEVER MUCH UNDERSTOOD "LOVING" OR "HATING" SOMEONE.
SO, MY RELATIONSHIPS HAVE ALWAYS JUST BEEN ON THAT LEVEL.
...
AH... I HURT HER FEELINGS.
SORRY, I WASN'T TALKING ABOUT YOU OR ANYTHING, SHINJOU-SAN.

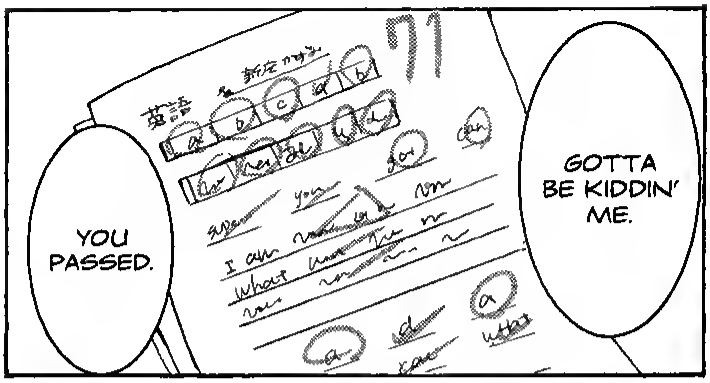
YOU GOT, LIKE, A COOL EXTE-RIOR...
I HEAR THAT A LOT.
THAT I'M CHILLY, OR YOU CAN'T TELL WHAT I'M THINKING--
NOT LIKE THAT.

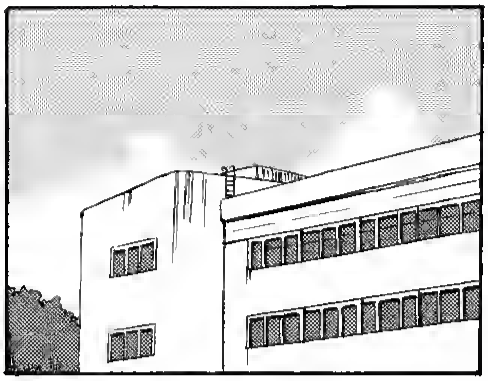
YOU'RE COOL, BUT YER NOT CHILLY.
THE WAY YOU'RE HELPIN' ME OUT LIKE THIS IS PROOF A' THAT.

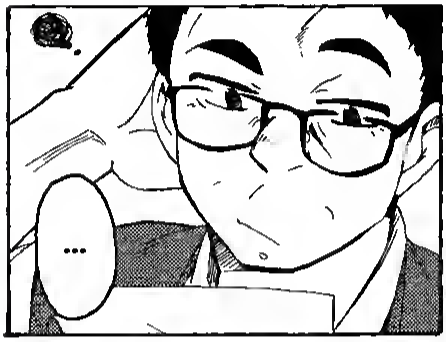
ZOOM
IF YOU SIT STILL AND BEHAVE YOURSELF, YES.
FOR REAL?
AHHH, SURE ARE MAKIN' ME JEALOUS THOUGH.
BEIN' WHAT I AM, I'LL NEVER GET ONE BOYFRIEND MY WHOLE LIFE
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT? YOU'RE PRETTY.
COME ON NOW, 'NOUGH WITH THE JOKES...
...
SO COULD YOU GIVE UP ON ALL THE FIGHTING?
IT'S SUCH A WASTE TO GET YOURSELF HURT LIKE THAT.
THINK I'M STARTIN' TO UNDERSTAND WHY YER POPULAR...
ba-dump
ba-dump
?


BUT, WELL,
IF IT'S YOU ASKIN' ME, MAYBE I REALLY WILL QUIT.
IT'S STRANGE.
UP UNTIL NOW, BEING BY MYSELF HAS ALWAYS BEEN EASIEST.
BUT BEING TOGETHER WITH SHINJOU-SAN IS SO MUCH FUN.
Woman's pride!
And anyway, what are you fighting over? In this day and age...


SHE'S AMAZINGLY PRETTY WHEN SHE SLEEPS.
CLICK
UGWAH!
SORRY, NODDED OFF THERE.
WHAT ON EARTH AM I DOING...?


71
YOU PASSED.
GOTTA BE KIDDIN' ME.

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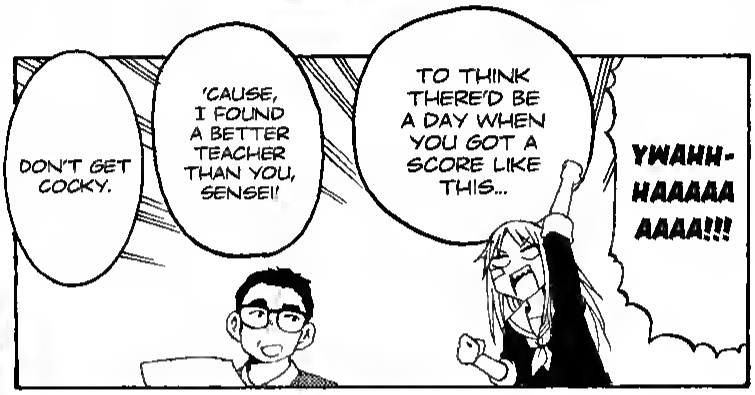
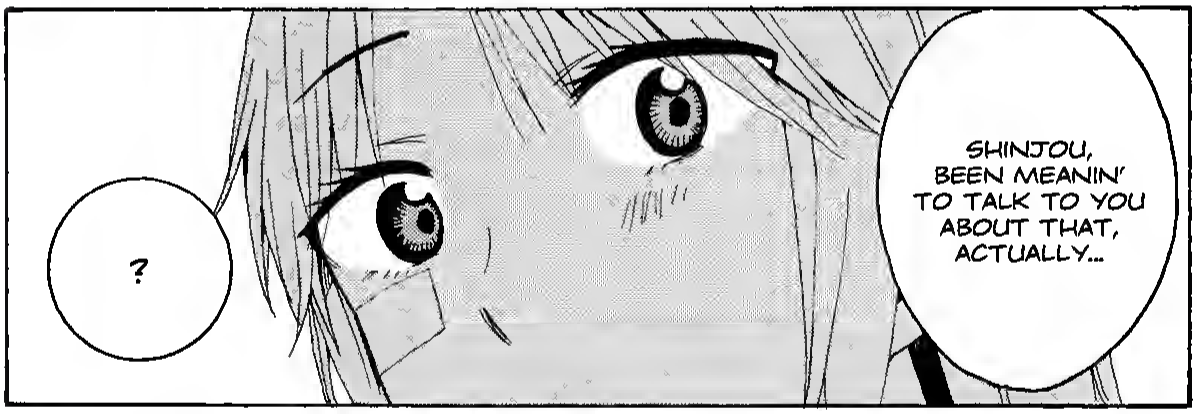
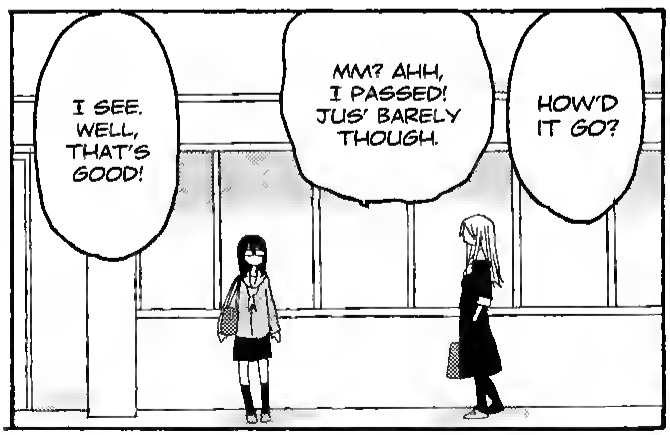
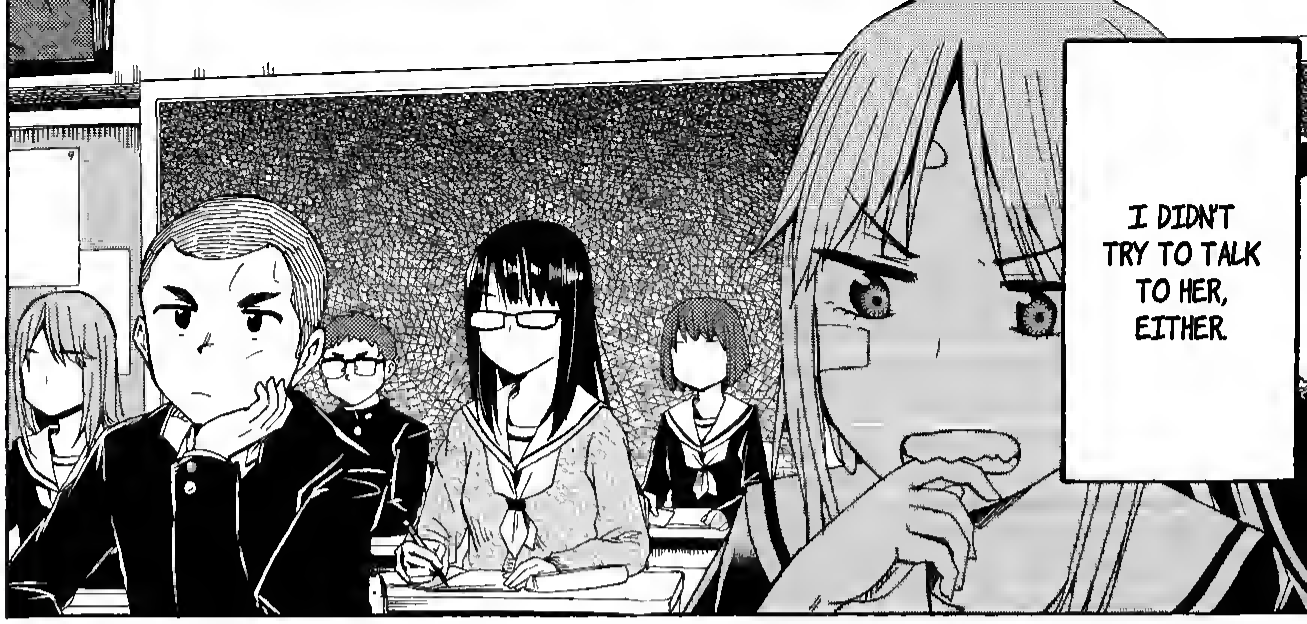

DON'T GET COCKY.
'CAUSE, I FOUND A BETTER TEACHER THAN YOU, SENSEI!
TO THINK THERE'D BE A DAY WHEN YOU GOT A SCORE LIKE THIS...
YWAHH-HAAAAAAAAA!!!


?
SHINJOU, BEEN MEANIN' TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT THAT, ACTUALLY...

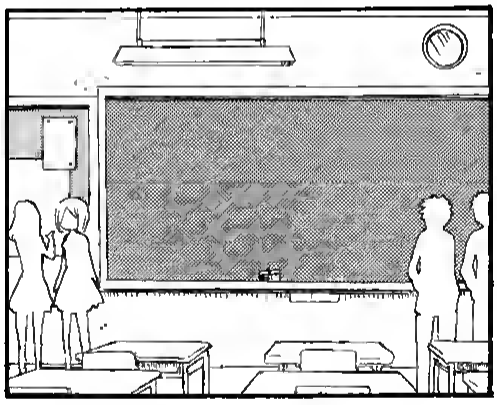

I SEE. WELL, THAT'S GOOD!
MM? AHH, I PASSED! JUS' BARELY THOUGH.
HOW'D IT GO?

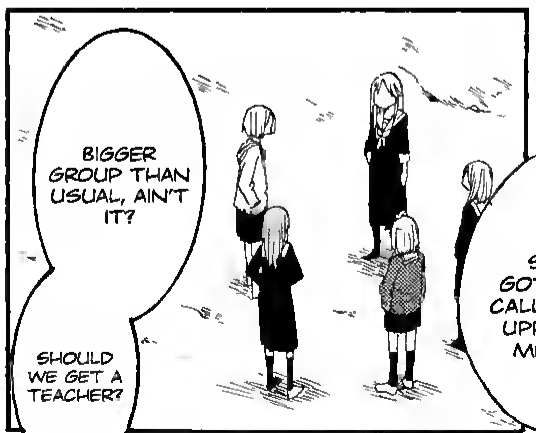
Slide

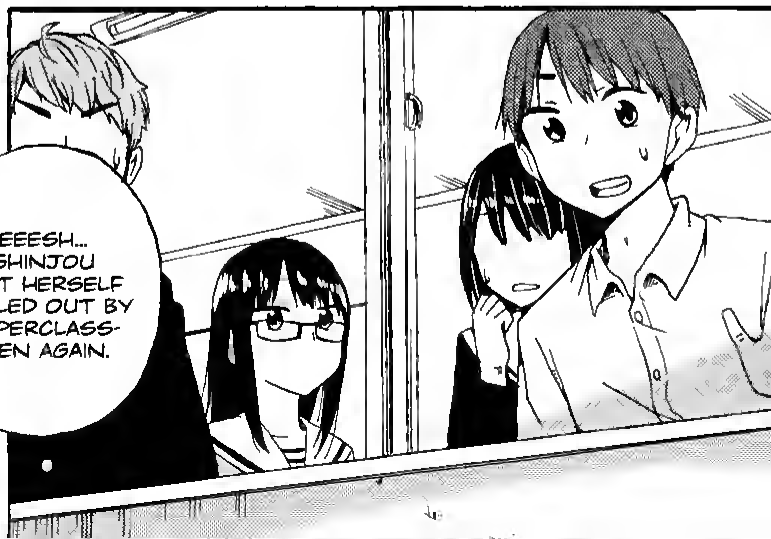
WITH THAT, SHINJOU-SAN CEASED COMING UP TO TALK TO ME.


I DIDN'T TRY TO TALK TO HER, EITHER.

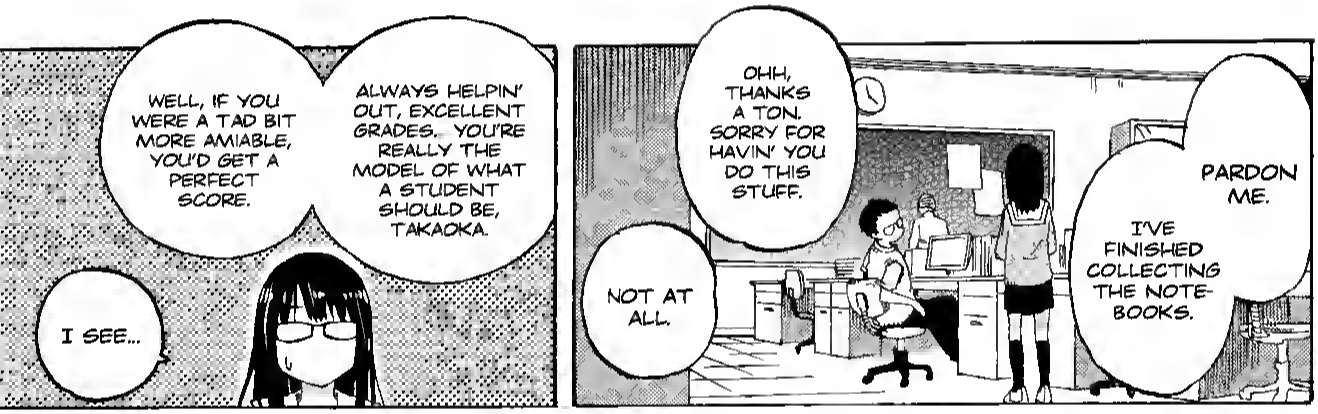
WITHOUT SAYING A WORD, WE BOTH JUST RETURNED TO OUR FORMER DAILY LIVES.
slurrrp




BIGGER GROUP THAN USUAL, AIN'T IT?
SHOULD WE GET A TEACHER?

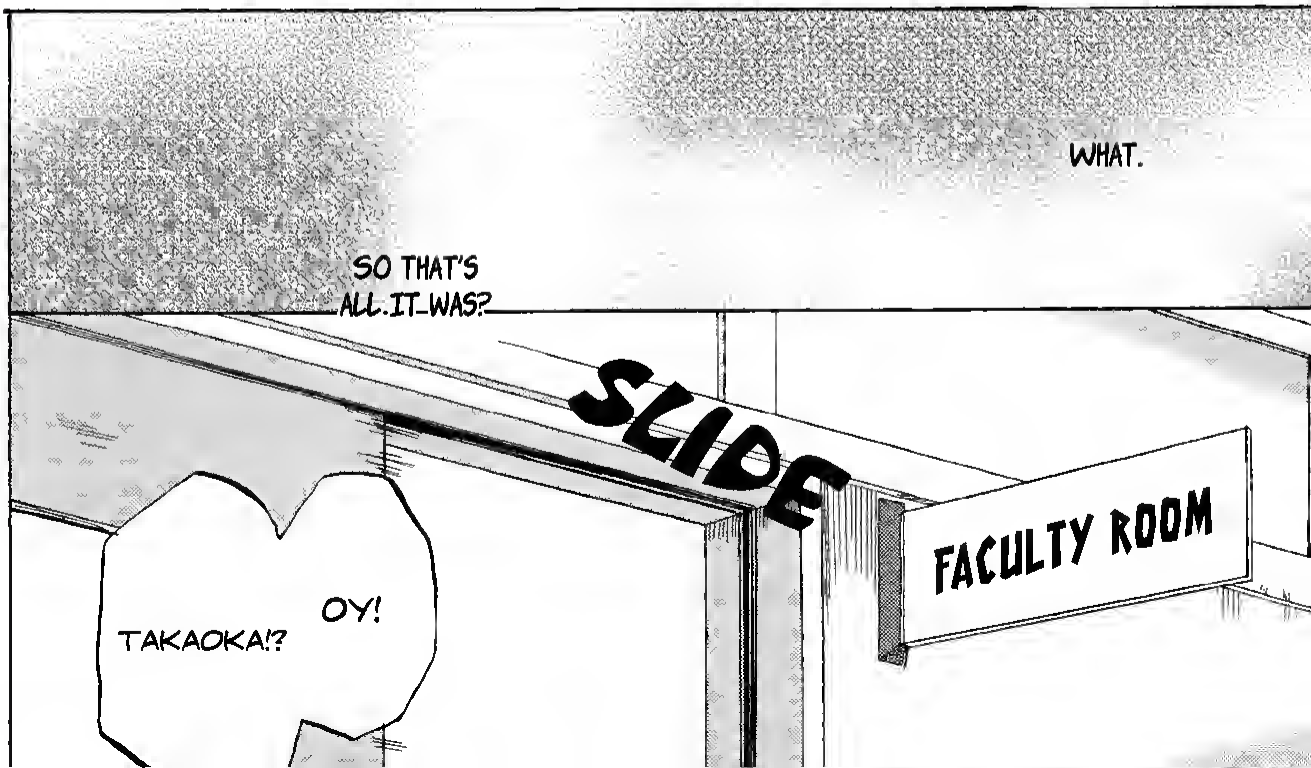

EEESH... SHINJOU GOT HERSELF CALLED OUT BY UPPERCLASS-MEN AGAIN.

IN THE END, IT WAS JUST THAT LEVEL OF RELATIONSHIP.
"IF IT'S YOU ASKIN' ME, MAYBE I REALLY WILL QUIT."
...


WELL, IF YOU WERE A TAD BIT MORE AMIABLE, YOU'D GET A PERFECT SCORE.
ALWAYS HELPIN' OUT, EXCELLENT GRADES. YOU'RE REALLY THE MODEL OF WHAT A STUDENT SHOULD BE, TAKAOKA.
I SEE...
OHH, THANKS A TON. SORRY FOR HAVIN' YOU DO THIS STUFF.
NOT AT ALL.
PARDON ME.
I'VE FINISHED COLLECTING THE NOTE-BOOKS.

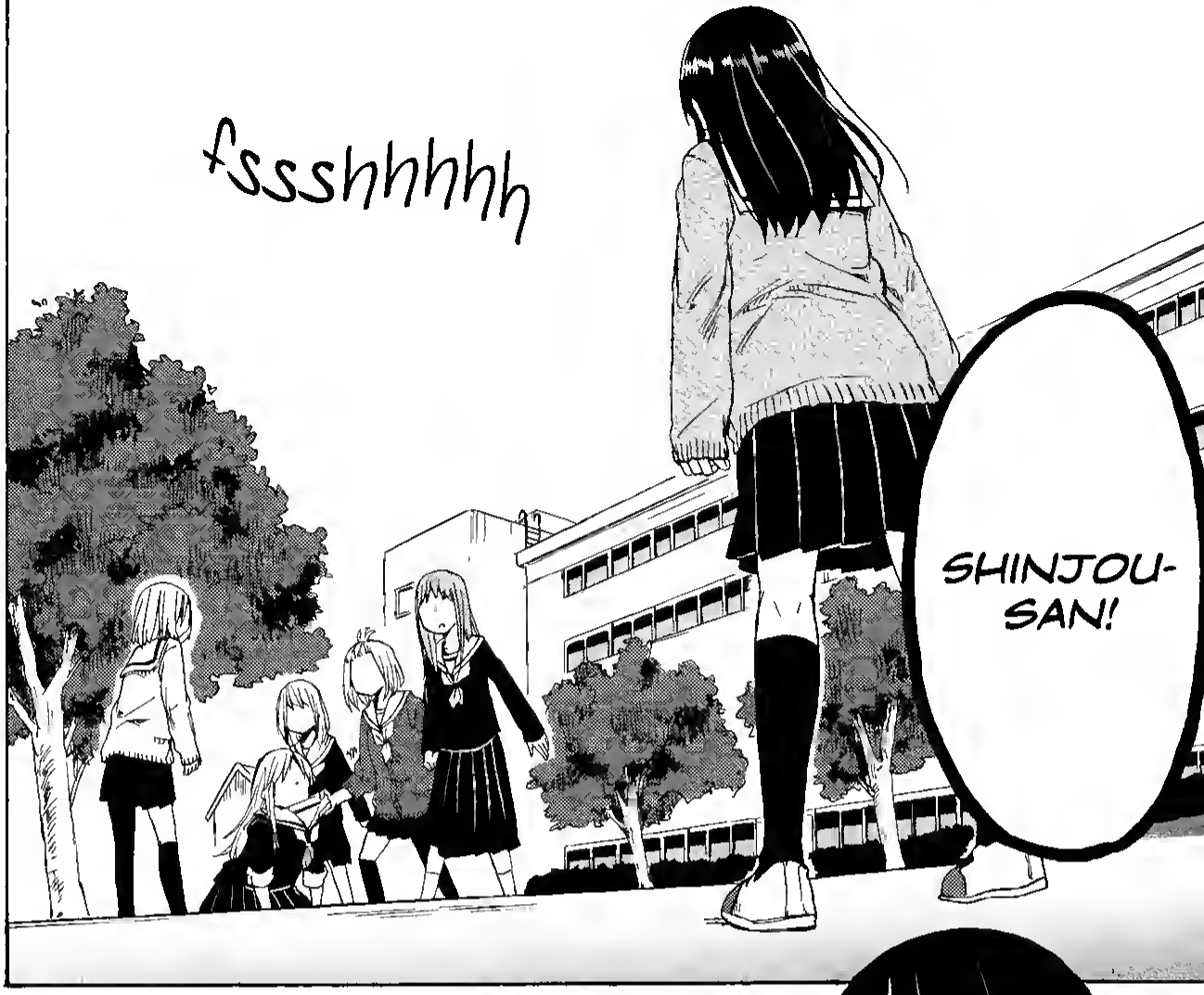
THAT'S WHY I HAD A TALK WITH SHINJOU, TOO.
"STOP BEIN' A BOTHER TO TAKAOKA," I TOLD HER...

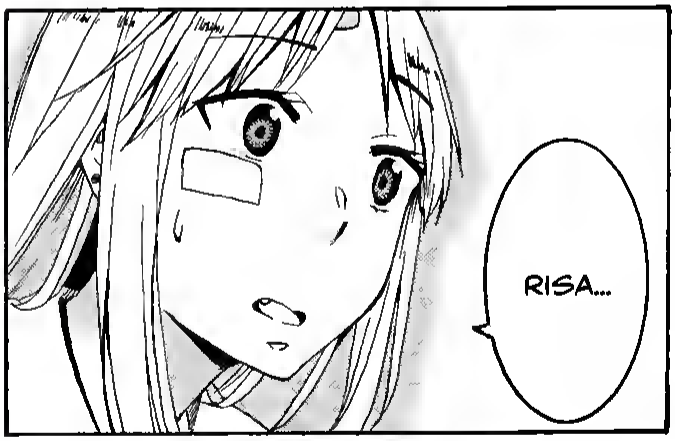
YOU GOT A PRETTY GOOD CHANCE AT GETTIN' INTO A GREAT COLLEGE.
STICK AROUND SOMEBODY LIKE HER, AND SOONER OR LATER YOU'LL GET MIXED UP IN SOME TROUBLE.


WHAT.
SO THAT'S ALL IT WAS?
SLIDE
FACULTY ROOM
OY!
TAKAOKA!?

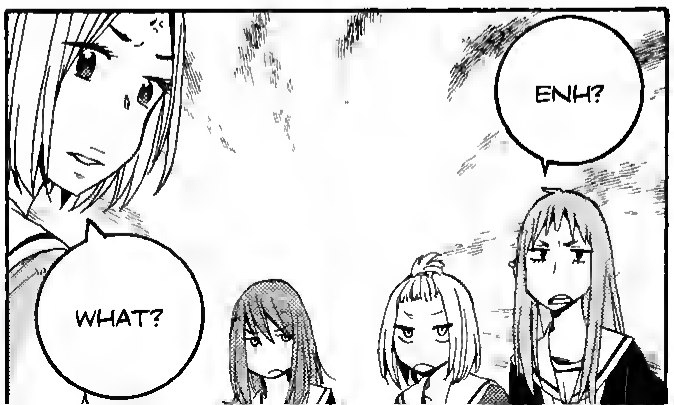
I'M TICKED OFF.
AT MYSELF.

I NEVER MUCH UNDERSTOOD "LOVING" OR "HATING" SOMEONE.
SO, MY RELATION-SHIPS HAVE ALWAYS JUST BEEN ON THAT LEVEL.
WHAT THE HELL IS "THAT LEVEL OF RELATION-SHIP"?
I'M THE ONE WHO NEVER TRIES TO STOP ANYONE FROM DRIFTING AWAY.
THE PERSON WHO GOT WOUNDED BACK THEN... WASN'T ME.


fssshhhhh
SHINJOU-SAN!


RISA...

...


ENH?
WHAT?

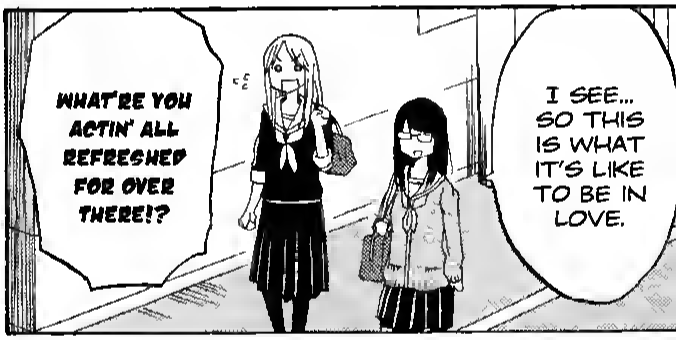
DUNNO WHO THE HELL Y'ARE, BUT DON'T GET IN THE-
MOVE.
NNHH!? WHAT'S WITH YER ATTITUD-
DON'T TOUCH ME.
glare
...PARDON US.
UM-
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
crouch
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR USUAL STRENGTH?
...!

...I PROM-ISED...
TOLDYA... I WOULDN'T FIGHT ANY-MORE.
LET'S GO HOME.
I WANT TO WALK HOME WITH YOU, SHINJOU-SAN.
IT SEEMS I'VE COME TO LIKE YOU.

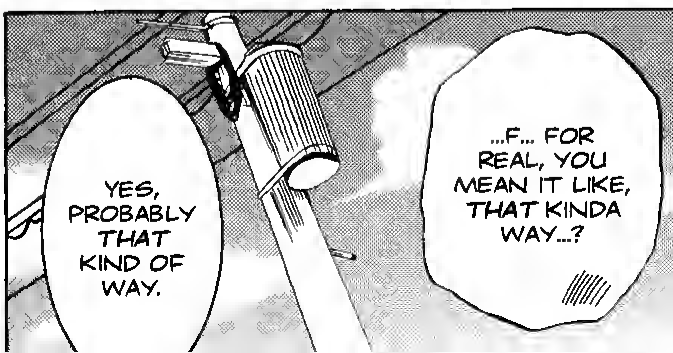
...OK.
LET'S GO.
O- OY! WHADDYA THINK...
HOLD UP THERE!
WHAT THE HECK'S YOU PEOPLE'S DEAL, ACTIN' ALL GROSS! YOH LESBIANS OR SOMETHIN'?
HUH!?
IT AIN'T NOTHIN' LIKE THAT!
SO WHAT IF I AM?
...EH?
EH?
AH...

HUHH HH!?
MY TRUE FEELINGS ACCIDENTALLY CAME OUT OF MY MOUTH.

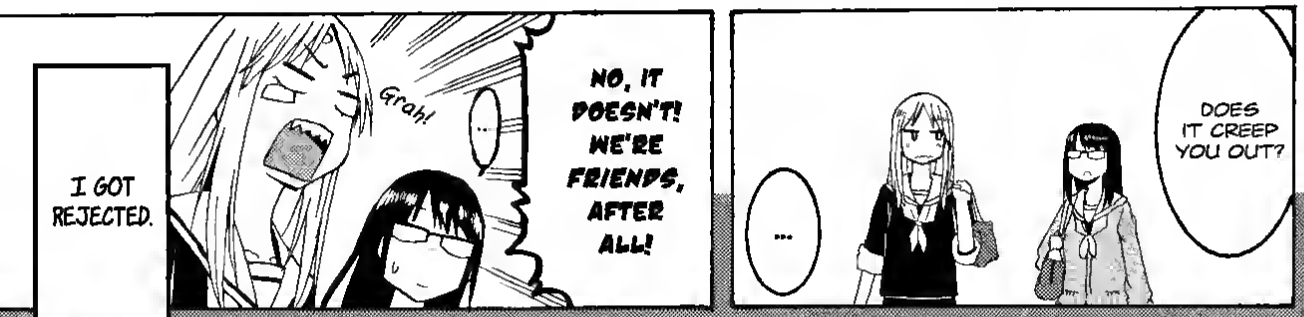
AFTER ALL, RIGHT NOW...


WHAT'RE YOU ACTIN' ALL REFRESHED FOR OVER THERE!?
I SEE... SO THIS IS WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE IN LOVE.

HUH!?
Fresh and clear
RECOG-NIZING MY FEELINGS KIND OF CLEARED MY HEAD, SOMEHOW.

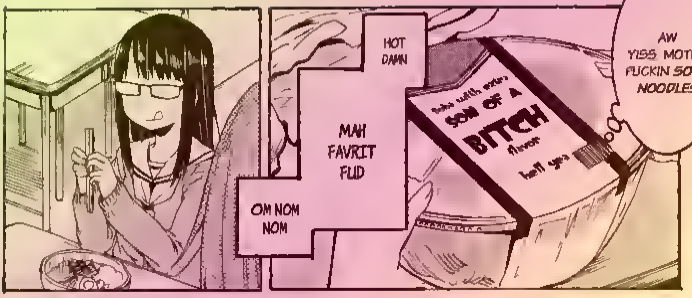

YES, PROBABLY THAT KIND OF WAY.
...F... FOR REAL, YOU MEAN IT LIKE, THAT KINDA WAY...?

Blush
WHAT THE HECK'S WITH THAT... GEEZ...
What'm I s'posed to say to that...
YOU LOOK SO CUTE TO ME, SHINJOU-SAN.


I GOT REJECTED.
Grah!
NO, IT DOESN'T! WE'RE FRIENDS, AFTER ALL!
...
DOES IT CREEP YOU OUT?

I RESOLVED MYSELF NOT TO GIVE UP ON THEM SO EASILY.
BUT,
SINCE THESE BRAND-NEW FEELINGS TOOK THE TROUBLE TO BLOOM,
AH,
SHOULD WE HOLD HANDS?
DON'T START HANGIN' ON ME RIGHT AFTER GETTIN' ALL SERIOUS...!
End

And anyway. what are you fighting over? In this day and age—
Woman's pride!



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